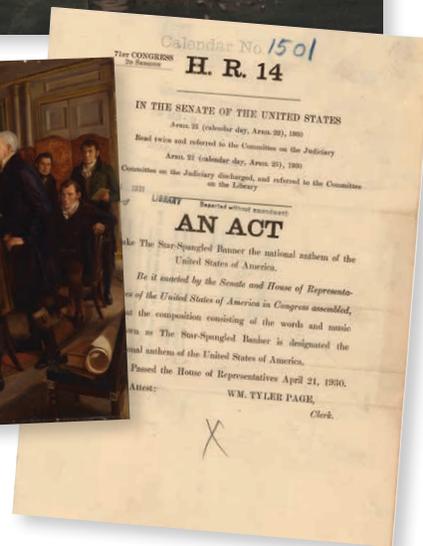


# CONGRESS AND THE WAR OF 1812

*Historic Treasures in Exhibition Hall*



Instrumental to our identity and future national development, the War of 1812 both shaped and was shaped by Congress. International in scope and economic in nature, the war would not only inspire a national anthem, but would define Congress's mission for the era to come and fundamentally change the nation's political parties.



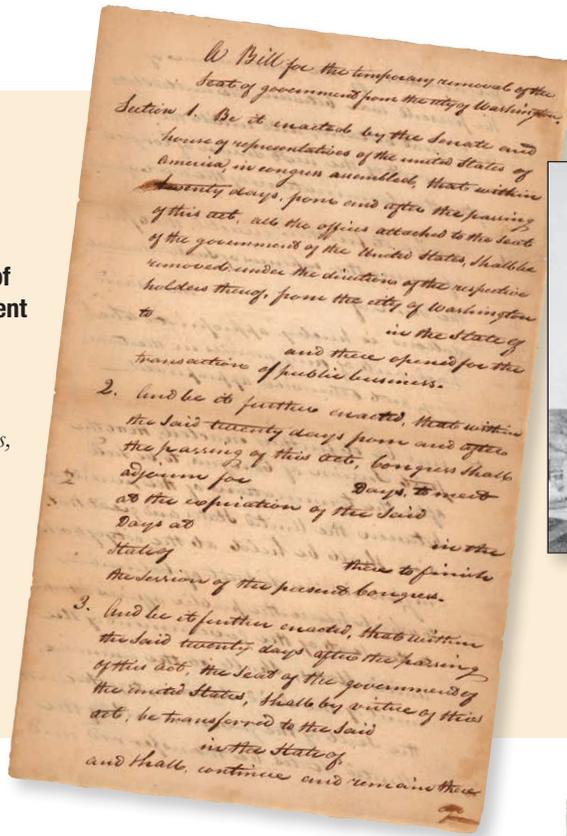
U.S. CAPITOL

[www.visitthecapitol.gov](http://www.visitthecapitol.gov)



**3 A Bill for the temporary removal of the seat of government from Washington, October 13, 1814**

Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, National Archives and Records Administration



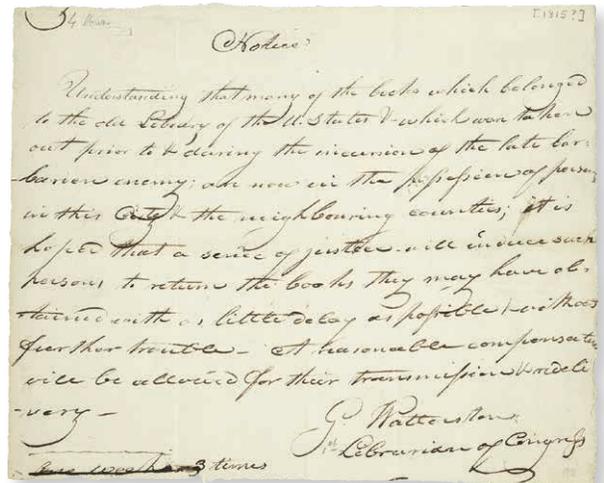
**4 Brick Capitol, photograph by Matthew Brady, 1865**

Records of the Chief Signal Officer, National Archives and Records Administration

**5 The Hartford Convention or Leap No Leap, etching by William Charles, ca. 1814**

New England's Federalist Party opposed the War of 1812 because of its disastrous impact on the region's economy. Meeting in Hartford, Connecticut, in December 1814, party delegates secretly debated—and rejected—secession; instead, they drafted constitutional amendments strengthening state controls over commerce and militias.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress



**6 Notice signed by Librarian of Congress George Watterston, ca. 1815**

When British troops burned the U.S. Capitol in August 1814, they destroyed the Library of Congress, which was housed in the building. To help rebuild the collection, Librarian of Congress George Watterston issued a call for return of any books borrowed before the invasion or removed during the attack.

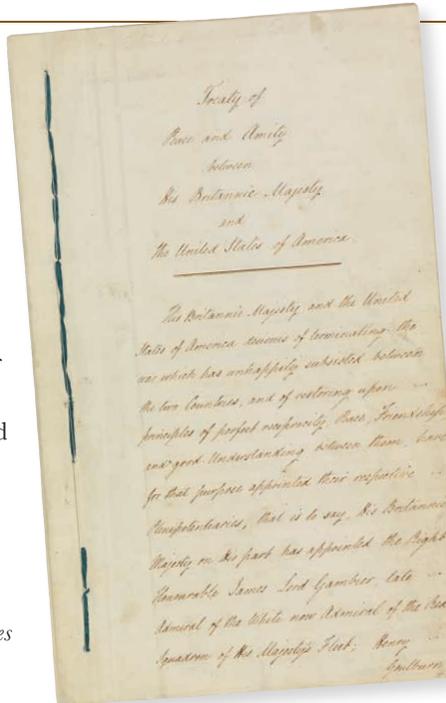
Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

## THE TREATY OF GHENT

Delegates from Great Britain and the United States signed a treaty to end the War of 1812 on December 24, 1814, in Ghent, Belgium. Though it did not address all the causes of the conflict, the Treaty of Ghent initiated a lasting peace between the United States and Great Britain.

### 7 Treaty of Ghent, 1814

*General Records of the U.S. Government, National Archives and Records Administration*



### 8 The Signing of the Treaty of Ghent, Christmas Eve, 1814, oil on canvas by Sir Amédée Forestier, 1914

*Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of the Sulgrave Institution of the U.S. and Great Britain*



## THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

“The Star-Spangled Banner” is a song based on a poem by Francis Scott Key. He was inspired by the sight of the American flag during the British attack on Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. The patriotic song became popular during the nineteenth century, and Congress officially designated it as the national anthem in 1931.

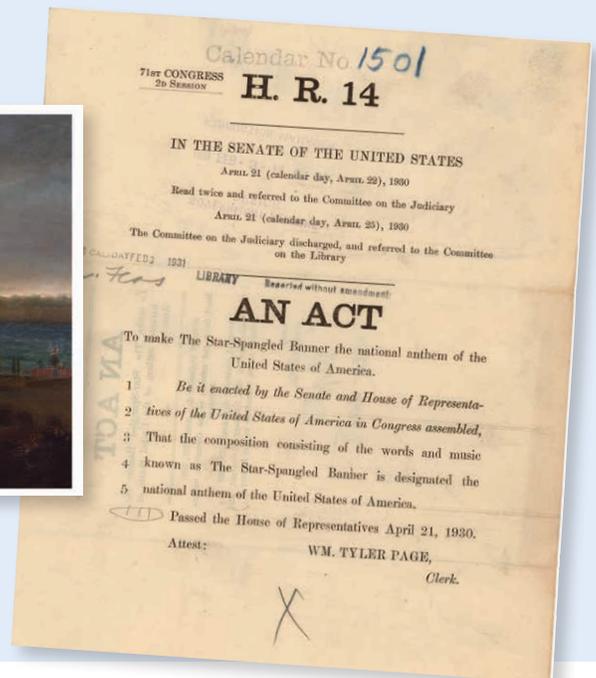


### 9 Bombardment of Fort McHenry, oil on canvas by Alfred Jacob Miller, ca. 1828-1830

*Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society, Acquisition No. 1901.2.3*

### 10 H.R. 14, An Act to make The Star-Spangled Banner the national anthem of the United States of America, April 21, 1930 (enacted March 3, 1931)

*Records of the U.S. Senate, National Archives and Records Administration*



## Legislative Highlights

### 11 “Captains Lewis and Clark Holding a Council with the Indians,” etching by Patrick Gass, *Journals of the . . . Corps of Discovery, 1810*

To gain congressional support for an exploring expedition to the Louisiana Territory, President Thomas Jefferson sent Congress a confidential message emphasizing the potential value of trade with the territory’s American Indians. Funded by Congress, the expedition established diplomatic relations with American Indian nations and gathered information that would shape U.S. policy towards them for many years.

*Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress*



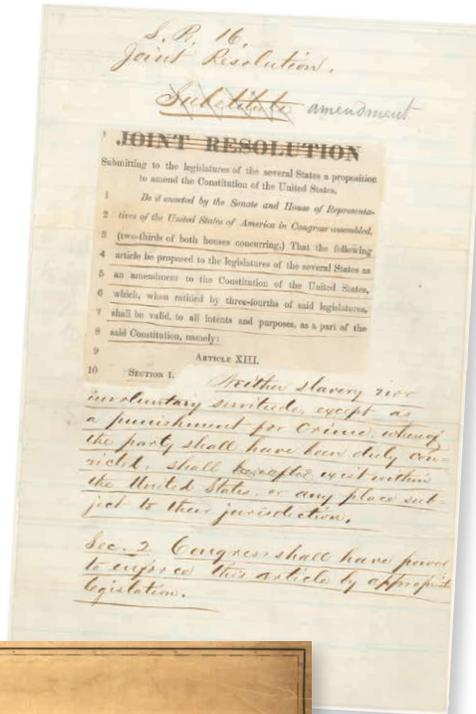
*Captains Lewis & Clark holding a council with the Indians Page 17*

### 12 S.J. Res. 16, Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution to abolish slavery, April 1864

This Senate resolution became the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery in the United States and any

place subject to its jurisdiction and gave Congress the power to pass legislation necessary to enforce the amendment. Congress submitted it to the states on January 31, 1865, and its ratification was completed within the year, on December 6, 1865.

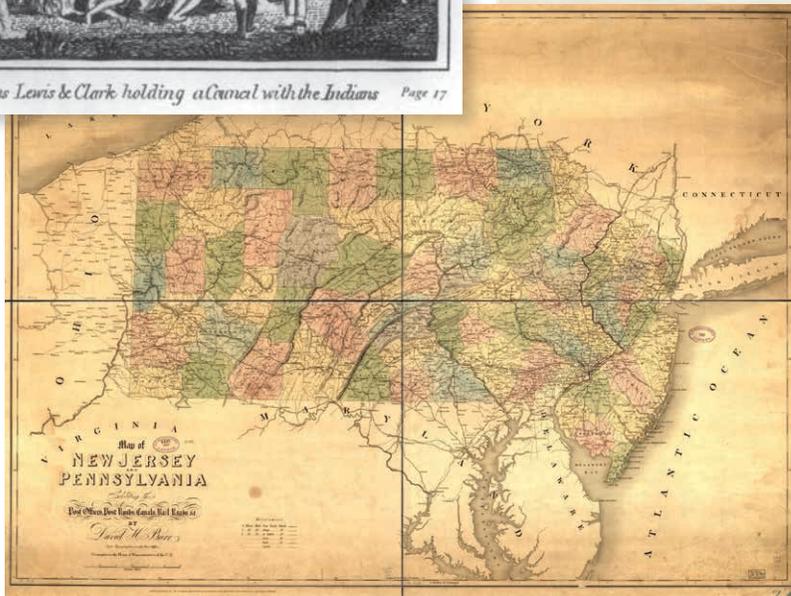
*Records of the U.S. Senate, National Archives and Records Administration*



### 13 *Map of New Jersey and Pennsylvania Exhibiting the Post Offices, Post Roads, Canals, Rail Roads, &c.*, by David Burr, 1839

Post roads, so called because mail was carried over them, were the major land routes linking towns. So vital were these links that both houses of Congress established a Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads as one of their first standing committees.

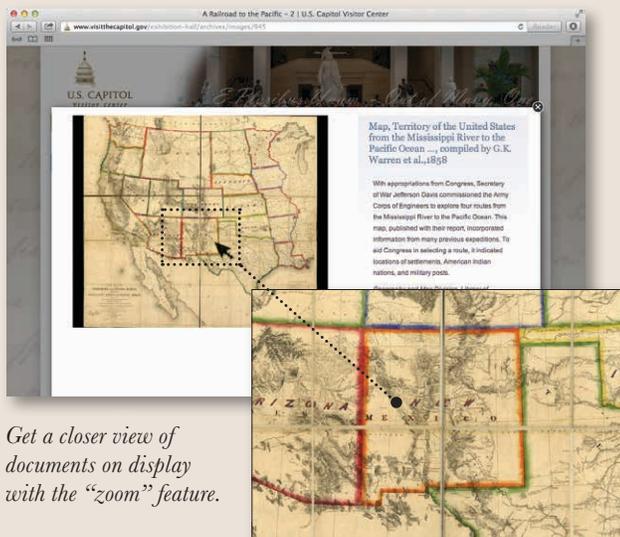
*Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress*





## Exhibition Hall Online

Explore the Capitol Visitor Center's online exhibition. Find out more about the fascinating artifacts and documents in Exhibition Hall that tell the story of the history of Congress and the building of the Capitol at [www.visitthecapitol.gov/exhibit](http://www.visitthecapitol.gov/exhibit).



Get a closer view of documents on display with the "zoom" feature.



ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

## A More Perfect Union

"Congress and the War of 1812" is the theme of the documents currently on display in the exhibit **A More Perfect Union**.

This section of Exhibition Hall illustrates the role of Congress in defining and helping to realize national goals and aspirations. Treasured documents from the National Archives and the Library of Congress trace the journey toward "a more perfect union" through the actions of Congress.



ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Documents are arranged in six thematic sections—**Exploration, Common Defense, Unity, Freedom, General Welfare and Knowledge**.



ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

## LOCATION & HOURS

The Capitol Visitor Center, the public entrance to the U.S. Capitol, is located below the East Plaza of the Capitol between Constitution and Independence Avenues.

**Hours:** The Capitol Visitor Center is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday. It is closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and Inauguration Day.

**Official Business:** Visitors with official business appointments may enter the Capitol Visitor Center as early as 7:15 a.m.

**Accessibility:** Listening devices with audio description of the U.S. Capitol tour orientation film and Exhibition Hall are available at the Information Desks. Visitors may request wheelchairs at the North Coat Check located on the Upper Level or from Capitol Visitor Center staff. All restrooms are accessible.

**International Visitors:** Visitors may request listening devices for foreign-language versions of the U.S. Capitol tour orientation film and the Exhibition Hall audio tour at the Information Desks.

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*On the Cover: (clockwise) The U.S. Capitol after Burning by the British, ink and watercolor on paper by George Munger, ca. 1814 (detail); H.R. 14, An Act to make The Star-Spangled Banner the national anthem of the United States of America, April 21, 1930; The Signing of the Treaty of Ghent, Christmas Eve, 1814, oil on canvas by Sir Amédée Forestier, 1914*



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